

**For More Information Contact Your  
NRCS/Conservation District Office**  
<http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov>

**Belknap County**

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Laconia, NH 03246-2772  
(603) 527-5800

**Carroll County**

73 Main Street  
PO Box 533  
Conway, NH 03818-0533  
(603) 447-2771

**Cheshire County**

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Walpole, NH 03608-9744  
(603) 756-2988

**Coos County**

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Lancaster, NH 03584-9612  
(603) 788-4651

**Grafton County**

250 Swiftwater Road, Room 6  
Woodsville, NH 03785-0229  
(603) 747-2001

**NRCS Field Office**

Telly's Plaza, 243 Calef Highway  
Epping, NH 03042  
(603) 679-1587

**North Country RC&D**

719 North Main Street  
Laconia, NH 03246-2772  
(603) 527-2093

**Hillsborough County**

Chappell Prof. Center  
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Milford, NH 03055-3442  
(603) 673-2409

**Merrimack County**

The Concord Center  
10 Ferry St., Box 312  
Concord, NH 03301-5081  
(603) 223-6023

**Rockingham County**

110 North Road  
Brentwood, NH 03833-6614  
(603) 679-2790

**Strafford County**

259 County Farm Rd #3  
Dover, NH 03820-6015  
(603) 749-3037

**Sullivan County**

24 Main Street  
Newport, NH 03773-1500  
(603) 863-4297

**NRCS State Office**

Federal Building  
Durham, NH 03824  
(603) 868-7581

**Southern NH RC&D**

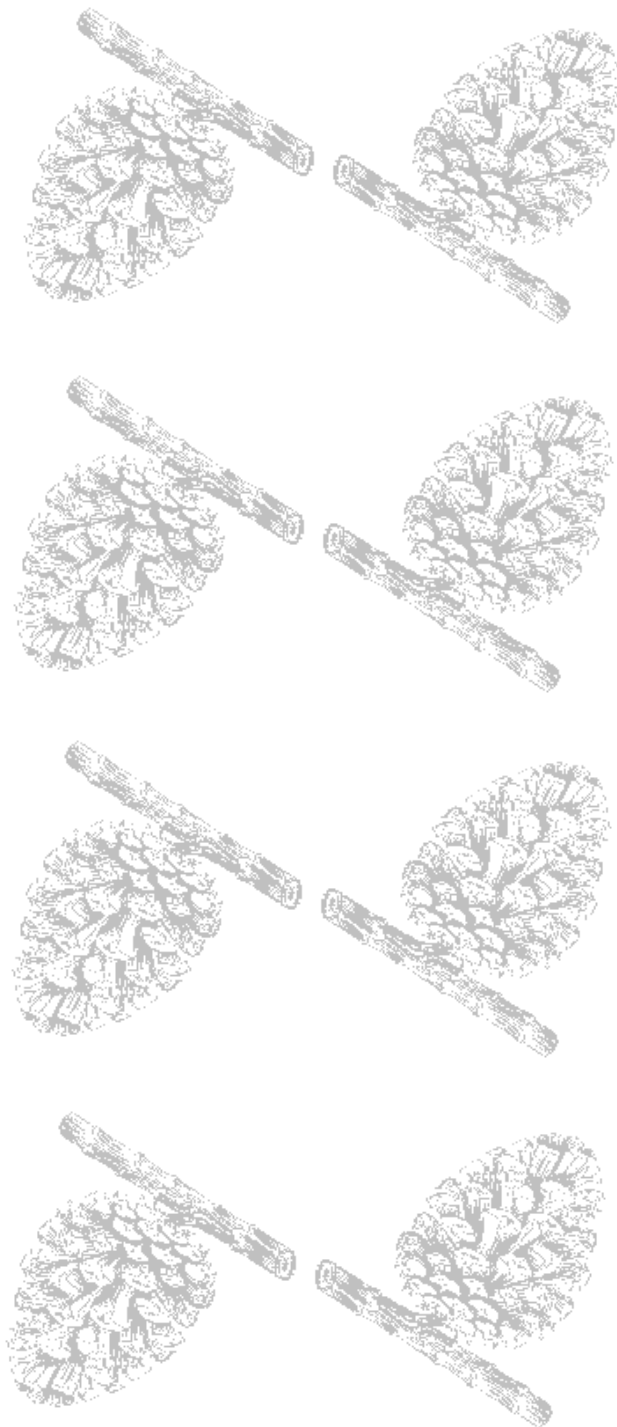
The Concord Center  
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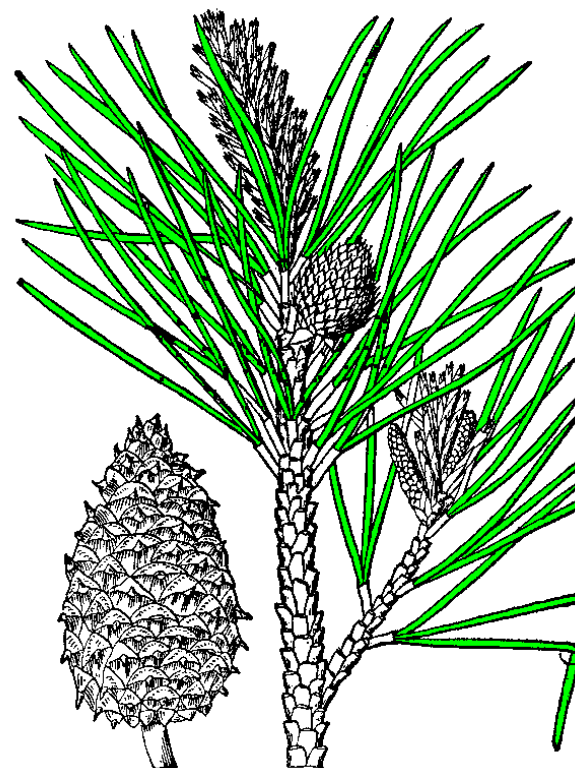
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## Let's Restore New Hampshire's Pine Barrens



## What is a Pine Barren?

A Pine Barren is a rare forest type that grows on very dry soils. The dominant tree is pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*). Typically the understory includes plants adapted to dry conditions including low bush blueberry, scrub oak, sweetfern, bracken fern, little bluestem and other adapted plants. In southern New Hampshire, wild lupine may also be present. Historically, fire played a major role in maintaining and regenerating Pine Barrens. Pitch pine and other Barrens plants are adapted to fire. Fire acts to reduce competition and create the sunny areas of bare mineral soil needed for pitch pine seedlings to sprout and grow.

## Why are they important?

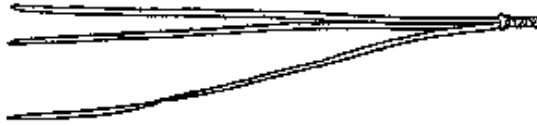
Pine Barrens are home to some of the rarest wildlife in the state, especially rare moths and butterflies. In fact, the only known habitat of the karner blue butterfly in New Hampshire is one small remnant of a Pine Barren in an urban setting.

## Do you have a potential Pine Barren on your property?

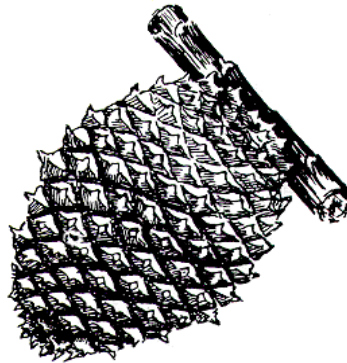
Suitable restoration sites will typically be on dry sandy soils. If you have a soil map of your property, look for areas of excessively or somewhat excessively drained soils such as Windsor and Hinkley. Areas in and around abandoned gravel pits may also be suitable.

The presence of pitch pine and other Pine Barren plants is a clue to potential sites. Pitch pine is a medium-sized evergreen that grows 50 to 60 feet tall and may reach over 30 inches in diameter. The twisted yellow-green needles are found in bunches of three.

The more common white pine has needles in bunches of five and red pine has needles in



bunches of two. The bark of pitch pine is reddish-brown to dark gray, and appears as thick plates deeply furrowed with scaly ridges. The cones are stout, egg-shaped and prickly. They may remain on the tree for years even after releasing their seeds. Branches sometimes twist downward and the trunk often sprouts tufts of needles. Unlike most other pines, the stumps of pitch pine can sprout, a useful adaptation following fire.



## Joint Efforts

Many landowners are working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and County Conservation Districts to restore Pine Barrens on their property. Cooperating in this effort are state, federal and local agencies and non-profit groups.

Included are the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, NH Fish & Game, NH Division of Forests and Lands, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NH Natural Heritage Program, the Nature Conservancy, and UNH Cooperative Extension. Several cost-share programs are available to help landowners restore Pine Barrens on their property.

## Restoring Pine Barrens

There are three steps in restoring Pine Barrens (or any other native ecosystem).

- Understand the ecosystem under natural conditions.
- Understand the human caused stressors that have degraded it.
- Figure out how to relieve the stressors.

There are many stressors on Pine Barrens including habitat fragmentation and fire suppression. NRCS will work with landowners to develop a restoration plan tailored to their specific situation. Participation in these programs is voluntary. Some of the measures offered are selective cutting of vegetation, prescribed burning, planting of native vegetation and mechanical preparation of seedbeds.

## What can you do?

Contact your nearest NRCS and Conservation District office. They will assist you in determining if you have a potential restoration site on your property. They can also offer assistance on restoring other important ecosystems such as wetlands and grasslands.